



Commission on Disabilities

Minutes

Tuesday, September 20, 2022, 10 am

Virtual Meeting at <https://actonma.zoom.us/j/94313570425> .

Members present: Franny Osman, Lisa Franklin (co-chair), Joan Burrows, Leslie Johnson

Member not present: Pasha Kokis

Associate member present: Melissa Wingfield;

Select Board Liaison: Jim Snyder-Grant

Town Manager's office: Austin Cyganiewicz

Visitors: John G., Charles, Davida, Minhua.

Announcements: The Massachusetts Office on Disability's Citizen Access Monitor training is underway, hosted by Acton—this time, virtual.

Austin updated us about the local **transportation** program, including the improved MBTA student (and people with disability) i.d. program. I.D.s are available through Acton Town Hall. (?)

Citizen's Concerns: Lisa mentioned an issue of someone who wants help from high school students and in order to get that volunteer help through the high school, a note saying they have a disability is required. Is this something COD can provide?

August 16, 2022 minutes - Lisa moved and Leslie seconded to approve. Approved, all in favor 4-0.

Block Party at Kelley's Corner occurred and COD was not included on the official list of participants, and COD volunteers and high school kids were not clear where to set up their table. The event was successful all the same, with puppetry and shared information with families who stopped by. We must tell Julie Pierce-Onos, the Economic Development Director, to include us on future communiques about Town events.

Lisa and Pasha had a good meeting with **Acton Medical Associates** (AMA). AMA hired a new elevator company and installed a ramp to the third floor, alleviating COD's parking lot wheelchair concerns. They have a new training for Certified Nursing Assistants to properly assist people in wheelchairs.

Leslie questioned the Town's **emergency response** re: a summer power outage. Austin agrees we need a plan - a place for medications to be stored, showers, charging devices, etc. In winter we do get a phone call about shelters. We will discuss this at a future meeting. Davida notes that Harvard is working on a plan regarding such alerts. Sudbury had a big meeting on how all can help. It was noted we need a special plan for people with autism, memory issues, and more, and we need flyers or other publicity to public. We need to check with other surrounding towns. Littleton, Boxboro and Harvard all have charging stations. Deputy director for Littleton is Patricia Napoli—John G. finds her very helpful.

Re: **voting access** at the September primaries, Lisa reports success with the adaptive voting machines.

Discussion of creating **an online message board** where the public can get disability information such as what we email to each other (for example, Lisa's forwards of the Massachusetts CODA). The Town is not set up to allow an email shell to interested people. We discussed bringing back the COD newsletter, a blog, putting information in the monthly report from the Town Manager's office.

Discussion of **adaptive bicycle rental program** at NARA Park. One resident is offering a bicycle that has two seats side by side. Her husband now can't use it. There is also a different type of bicycle than we already have, the Delta, that would be useful for some people. It would cost \$1500 to \$1700. Franny moved, Lisa seconded, to offer up to \$600 toward this new bicycle purchase, and ask the Recreation Department to pay the rest. Our current budget unspent is \$1887.71 The motion passed 3-0 (one abstention). Franny or Leslie will talk to the Recreation Department about this offer.

Discussion of **membership**. Franny will leave the board in June, leaving one full member vacancy and the present associate member vacancy. There are presently three interested members: Minhua, Charles, and John. We discussed what the qualifications sought in membership might be, including a certain number of people with disabilities to be on the Commission, others being family members and allies--and what the process is for bringing in new members. The Volunteer Coordinating Committee sends a note to our Select Board liaison (Jim) when they receive and approve an application. There was disagreement about the role of the Commission on recommending names to the Select Board for appointment—or whether that decision is entirely up to the Select Board Liaison. We will seek clarity on the process.

Notes submitted by Joan, edited by Franny.

Acronyms:

CODA Commission on Disabilities Association (Mass.)

COA Acton Council on Aging

ER Emergency Room

TAC Acton Transportation Advisory Committee

SMOC Southern Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc.

Minutes submitted by Joan Burrows, edited into template by
Franny Osman